TAISHOU MUGEN KITAN

by You Higuri

CHAPTER ONE - "YIN & YANG"
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STORM IN HEAVEN

Taisho Mugen Kitan - Chapter 1 - "Yin & Yang"
Translator's Notes
(Taisho Era - 1912-1926 CE)

Note 1: Noh is a traditional form of Japanese theatre which developed in the 14th and 15th centuries. It is a highly stylized performance art that combines elements of dance, drama, music, mime and poetry. Although often too ponderous for Western tastes, Noh fuses abstract minimalism and aesthetic meditation into a widely respected and aristocratic art form that is still alive in Japan today.

Note 2: In Japanese folklore, foxes are believed to possess great cunning, long life, and magical powers. Foremost among these is the ability to take the shape of a human. Other powers commonly attributed to foxes include possession, the power to manifest in dreams, and the power to create illusions so elaborate as to be almost indistinguishable from reality.

Note 3: The name Youko can have various meanings depending on the kanji with which it is written. In this story, the kanji of the name changes depending upon the speaker although the pronunciation remains the same. Thus, when Sakuya speaks to Youko the meaning of the name is Radiant Child, a common girl's name. However, when Akira speaks to her, he calls her Fox Witch to indicate that he knows her true identity.

大正夢幻奇譚

氷栗優

* The Taisho Era was from 1912-1926 CE

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大正夢幻
奇譚
陰陽な二人
(いんようなふたり)
YIN AND YANG

RECENTLY I'VE BEEN HAVING NIGHTMARES EVERY NIGHT
IT'S LIKE AN OMINOUS PREMONITION...
BUT I DON'T KNOW WHO I CAN TALK TO ABOUT SOMETHING LIKE THIS.
DO YOU THINK I'M WEIRD, YOUKO?
I DREAM THAT I'M ENTANGLED IN IVY... AND IN MY DREAMS, I DIE.
MISS SAKUYA

AKIRA ?
BUT HE MUST BE TERRIBLY BUSY RIGHT NOW...
WHAT MAN?
WHAT IF YOU TALKED TO THAT MAN ABOUT IT?
OH!
AKIRA HANAWAKA! I'M SURE HE CAN HELP YOU SOMEHOW! I'M SURE OF IT!
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?
YOU'RE THE HEIR TO THE KARYUU FAMILY!

AH!
NO MATTER HOW MANY TIMES I WATCH HIM, HANAKAWA'S DANCING ALWAYS LEAVES ME BREATHLESS.
IT'S LIKE A GLIMPSE INTO A MYSTERIOUS OTHER WORLD.
YES!
HE REALLY IS THE FLOWER OF THE NOH WORLD.
thud
IT'S ALMOST AS IF HE WAS POSSESSED BY AN UNEARTHLY BEING.
HE'S SUCH A GIFTED DANCER.
THEY SAY THAT HE'LL BE THE NEXT HEAD OF THE HANAKAWA FAMILY. AND THEY CAN TRACE THEIR LINEAGE BACK TO THE MUROMACHI ERA!*
*APPROXIMATELY 1336–1573

SIR?
THE HEIR TO THE KARYUU FAMILY HAS ASKED IF YOU WILL GRANT HER AN AUDIENCE
MY APOLOGIES I NEED TO SPEAK WITH ONE OF MY PRIVATE PUPILS,
SO I'M AFRAID I WILL HAVE TO LEAVE YOU HERE
WHILE I DEMONSTRATE THE BASICS OF THIS STEP
LADIES, I DON'T MIND TALKING BUT PAY ATTENTION
WELL,
CONSIDERING HIS LINEAGE, PERHAPS IT RUNS IN THE BLOOD...
WE'LL TALK ABOUT THAT LATER.
TELL HER I'LL BE WITH HER IN A MOMENT.
WHAT !?
YOU'RE SO MEAN TEACHER!
We drove just to see you Teacher!
ARE YOU SURE THIS IS ALL RIGHT? WEREN'T YOU JUST IN THE MIDDLE OF PRACTICE...?
DANCING IS JUST A HOBBY FOR SUCH WEALTHY WOMEN THEY DON'T TAKE IT SERIOUSLY...
BESIDES, EVERYONE UNDERSTANDS THE POWER OF THE KARYUU FAMILY
KARYUU FAMILY...?
DO YOU MEAN THE BARON'S FAMILY?
MY, YOU DIDN'T KNOW?
THE HANAWAKA FAMILY OWES EVERYTHING TO THE KARYUU FAMILY...
A LONG TIME AGO THE HEAD OF THE HANAWAKA FAMILY ANGERED THE EMPEROR.
THEY WERE EVEN THREATENED WITH EXCOMMUNICATION
IF THEY HADN'T HAD THE SUPPORT OF THE KARYUU FAMILY THEY NEVER WOULD HAVE SURVIVED
IT'S THE ONLY REASON THEY WEREN'T IMPRISONED.

EVEN AKIRA
ALTHOUGH AT THE TIME HE WAS STILL JUST AN ADOPTED CHILD
EXCUSE ME
slide
OH!
slide
HAVE YOU NOTHING MORE TO SAY TO ME THAN "OH!"?
I CAN SEE THAT YOU'RE UNEASY.
SINCE YOU BROUGHT IT UP,
I'LL ASK: WHY HAVE YOU TAKEN THE FORM OF MY PATRON?

FOX WITCH
YOU'RE REMARKABLY DARING TO TRY AND FOOL ME WITH THAT DISGUISE
DO YOU WANT TO DIE?
AAH!
I WOULD NEVER BE SO STUPID AS TO CHALLENGE SOMEONE AS POWERFUL AS YOU
I KNOW THAT I'M TOO WEAK
IT'S BETTER TO BE SAFE THAN SORRY WHEN DEALING WITH SHAPE-SHIFTING SPIRITS
HOW DO I KNOW YOU'RE NOT A VENGEFUL GHOST?
BESIDES, YOU'RE NOT VERY GOOD AT DISGUISING YOURSELF

WE FOUGHT ONCE, LONG AGO
THAT'S WHY I KNOW THAT YOU HAVE POWER OVER THE SPIRITS
I CAME BECAUSE I HAD NO CHOICE!
SCUTTLE SCUTTLE
REALLY? AND WHAT BRINGS YOU BEGGING TO SOMEONE YOU DESPISE SO MUCH?
I NEED YOUR HELP
PLEASE, SAVE MY MISTRESS
ENTAN-GLED IN IVY?
SINCE THE DREAMS STARTED,
SHE'S BEEN WASTING AWAY
SHE CAN'T EVEN WALK ANYMORE
EVEN AT THE BEST OF TIMES, SHE WON'T EAT ANYTHING NOT A BITE
IF IT CONTINUES MUCH LONGER, THESE DREAMS REALLY WILL KILL HER!

YOU SEEM...
STRANGELY CONCERNED WITH HER FATE, MISTRESS FOX
!
WHAT DID YOU SAY?
I OWE HER MY LIFE!
I'VE SWORN TO PROTECT HER AT ANY COST! IT'S THE LAW AMONG FOXES!
HOW DARE YOU RIDICULE A SACRED OATH?
OKAY! I TAKE IT BACK!
Ah, you're slowly shirking again
FOXES ARE AN INCREDIBLY PROUD SPECIES! DON'T YOU EVER FORGET THAT!
LADY S. KUYA,
knock knock
YOU HAVE A VISITOR.
HM?
AKIRA!

BLUSH
OH MY
BUT I... LOOKING LIKE THIS... I CAN'T...
COVER
I CAME BECAUSE I WAS CONCERNED ABOUT YOU
MISS YOUKO HAS TOLD ME ABOUT YOUR PROBLEM.
DON'T WORRY
MY IVY DREAMS...
THEY BEGAN JUST AT THE END OF LAST MONTH
PERHAPS YOU WILL THINK ME VULGAR FOR SAYING THIS, BUT
THE VINES FELT AS WARM AS HUMAN FLESH... LIKE THAT OF A MAN.
AND RECENTLY SOMETHING THAT LOOKS LIKE A FACE HAS TAKEN SHAPE.
IT STARES AT ME SO PIERCINGLY, LIKE IT'S TRYING TO SAY SOMETHING
I...

AT THE END OF LAST MONTH, DIDN'T I SEE YOU AT THE KARYUU CORPORATION CHERRY BLOSSOM NOH FESTIVAL?
OH, YES!
I WAS DEEPLY MOVED BY YOUR EXQUISITE PERFORMANCE
AND THE PROBLEM BEGAN AROUND THEN?
DO YOU RECALL WHAT THE STORY WAS?
OH NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT...
IT'S A TRAGIC STORY ABOUT THE LOVE BETWEEN TEIKA FUJIWARA AND THE IMPERIAL PRINCESS SHIKISHI, AND HOW THEY WERE TORN APART BY THE DIFFERENCE IN THEIR SOCIAL POSITIONS
TEIKA WAS SO DESPERATELY IN LOVE WITH PRINCESS SHIKISHI THAT WHEN SHE DIED, HE TURNED HIMSELF INTO IVY AND TWINED HIMSELF AROUND HER TOMBSTONE
IT WAS TEIKA
!?!
AH!
WHAT? WHAT DOES THAT MEAN?
I DON'T GET IT.
sigh
THAT'S BECAUSE YOU'RE AN UNCULTURED BEAST

FOREVER MORE, MY LOVE, SLEEP SHROUDED [BY THE] COLORS OF SCARLET-TINGED IVY...
AND THE LEGACY OF MY END-LESS YEARN-ING...
HAUNTED BY TEIKA'S SUFFERING THE GHOST OF SHIKISHI
BEGS A WAN-DERING PRIEST TO HELP THEM. AND THAT'S HOW THE STORY BEGINS
THE PRIEST CHANTS THE LOTUS SUTRA
AND THE IVY LOOSENS AND WILTS AWAY. IN THE END, SHIKISHI'S SOUL IS FINALLY SET FREE
BUT WHY?
SHE SHOULD HAVE BEEN HAPPY HE LOVED HER SO MUCH
IT WASN'T LIKE THAT AT ALL
WHAT HE DID
IT WAS SO PAIN-FUL

DON'T GO! STAY WITH ME!
!?
LADY YOUKO!
I'M FINE
IT'S NOTHING
SHIKISHI DANCES WHEN SHE IS FREED
BUT HER BEAUTIFUL APPEARANCE SUDDENLY WITHERS AWAY SHE BECOMES AN OLD, OLD WOMAN
THE FIRE OF TEIKA'S PASSION BURNED HER SHE WAS FOREVER SUFFERING
SO IT WAS KARMA THAT WHEN SHE WAS FINALLY
RELEASED FROM HIS SUFFOCATING SPELL HER BEAUTY TOO
HAD BEEN DESTROYED

I SEE.
SO HE'S CALLING ME
CALLING YOU...!? WHO IS?
TEIKA
IT MAKES SENSE AFTER ALL,
IT IS THE SEASON FOR THE CHERRY BLOSSOM NOH FESTIVAL
YOU OF ALL PEOPLE SHOULD KNOW THAT MY DANCING ATTRACTS SPIRITS
THE DANCE ITSELF CASTS A SPELL THAT DRAWS IN MAGICAL CREATURES
SINCE YOU CAN USE MAGIC
WHY DON'T YOU FREE HER YOURSELF? EVEN YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO
I CAME TO YOU BECAUSE I CAN'T!
WELL IT'S TRUE THAT I COULD DO IT QUITE EASILY
I AM A MEMBER OF THE HANAKAWA FAMILY, AFTER ALL.

AS FAR AS I CAN SEE
THE MOST LIKELY EXPLANATION
IS THAT THE IVY ONLY POSSESSED YOUR MISTRESS BECAUSE IT WAS ATTRACTED TO THE POWER OF A SPIRIT LIKE YOURSELF
BUT THIS IS A STRANGE CASE
NORMALLY, A SPIRIT WOULD NEVER INTERFERE WITH AN UNINVOLVED HUMAN
IT DOESN'T FIT WITH THE LEGEND, EITHER.
BE-
BECAUSE OF ME?
SHOCK
I...
I SEE
PROBABLY, YES
BUT IT'S IMPOSSIBLE TO BE SURE
MY MISTRESS HAS ALWAYS BEEN
MORE SENSITIVE THAN OTHERS ARE
WELL THEN,
THAT'S PROBABLY ANOTHER REASON WHY THE SPIRIT OF TEIKA HAS ENSNARED HER.

SAKUYA IS VERY SIMILAR TO PRINCESS SHIKISHI
THE SPIRIT OF TEIKA COULD WELL HAVE MISTAKEN HER—
FOR HIS LOST BELOVED
A SOUL THAT HAS BEEN PURIFIED IS FREED OF ALL POISIONS
BUT, SHE COULD LOSE HER BEAUTY.
LIKE THE FALLEN BRANCHES OF A DEAD TREE, HER LIFETIME TOO COULD FLOW AWAY.
!
WE HAVE TO SAVE LADY SAKUYA!
IF WE EXORCISE THE SPIRIT OF SHIKISHI INSIDE SAKUYA,
THE GHOST OF TEIKA WILL ALSO DISAP-PEAR
BUT,
WON'T THAT ALSO DO IRREPARABLE DAMAGE TO LADY SAKUYA HERSELF?

NO... I WON'T LET THAT HAPPEN!
SHE'S SO YOUNG AND BEAUTIFUL...!
I WON'T LET IT!
THERE'S ONE OTHER POSSIBILITY... BUT IT'S DIFFICULT...
TAIZAN FU?
YES LORD TAIZANFU
IF YOU SACRIFICE YOURSELF AS A SUBSTITUTE FOR SAKUYA, THEN TEIKA'S CURSE WILL FALL UPON YOU INSTEAD
LADY SAKUYA'S LIFE WITH MY OWN?
YOU'RE SAYING YOU CAN REPLACE
IT'S CALLED THE PRINCIPLE OF YIN AND YANG

AN EPIC BATTLE BETWEEN THE GHOST OF TEIKA AND A PATHETIC 800-YEAR OLD FOX SPIRIT
IT'LL BE INTERESTING, WHOEVER WINS
SOUNDS COLORFUL
YOU THINK THIS IS FUN!?
BUT WHAT WILL HAPPEN IF I LOSE?
WOULD MY SPIRITUAL STRENGTH WEAKEN?
And whose fault would that be!?
DON'T FOOL YOURSELF
A FOX SPIRIT ONLY HAS ONE LIFE
BUT DON'T WORRY
IF YOU SCREW UP, I'LL INTERFERE BEFORE YOU CAN CAUSE ANYONE ANY MORE TROUBLE
I PROMISE
YOU REALLY ARE
A COMPLETE AND UTTER BASTARD!

I THOUGHT THAT ONLY THE MOST POWERFUL SORCERERS COULD SUCCESSFULLY PERFORM SUCH INVOCATIONS
HOW IS IT THAT A MERE NOH MASTER KNOWS THE TEACHINGS OF LORD TAIZANFU?
MASTER HANAKAWA!
WHEN I'VE CHOSEN THE TIME, YOU WILL HAVE TO BRING SAKUYA TO ME
THEN I'LL EXAMINE THE CALENDAR AND DETERMINE THE MOST AUSPICIOUS DAY FOR THE CEREMONY.
I SUPPOSE THAT'S TRUE
BUT I HAVE NO INTENTION OF DISCUSSING MY PERSONAL HISTORY WITH YOU AT THIS TIME
IF YOU DON'T TRUST ME THAT'S YOUR PROBLEM.
I NEVER SAID THAT!
MY MISTRESS

rustle
DID AKIRA LEAVE?
YOU ARE THE ONLY ONE
I PROBABLY DON'T HAVE MUCH TIME LEFT
IT'S LIKE MY BODY IS GETTING WEAKER AND WEAKER EVERY DAY
AAH IT'S ALREADY DARK
I GUARANTEE IT!!
YOU'RE GOING TO GET BETTER!
DON'T BE RIDICULOUS!

THANK YOU, YOUKO HAVING YOU WITH ME MEANS MORE THAN ANYTHING ELSE
DO YOU REMEMBER?
ONCE UPON A TIME, THERE WAS A WOUNDED FOX LEFT DYING IN THE MANSION GARDENS.
YOU KNELT DOWN BESIDE THAT FOX AND GENTLY GAVE HER WATER

YOUR KIND-NESS
IS SOME-THING THAT I WILL NEVER FORGET
AND I WILL REPAY IT
MIS-TRESS,
BE CAREFUL WHERE YOU STEP

WELCOME!
THE MASTER HAS BEEN WAITING FOR YOU. PLEASE COME THIS WAY.
!?
WHO'S THERE?
THIS WAY!
THIS WAY!
WHAT ARE THOSE? I'M SCARED!
WHERE IS AKIRA?
DON'T WORRY
I'M HERE WITH YOU
PLEASE COME IN

TEACH-
ER...
CALM
YOUR-
SELF
I'M HERE TO
SAVE YOU
FROM YOUR
SUFFERING

MIS-
TRESS
!!
FALL
COME
THIS
WAY
WHAT
DID YOU
DO TO
LADY
SAKUYA
..!?
I..
THAT
IS
IF YOU'RE
PREPARED
I AM

W
WHAT
WHAT SHOULD I DO?
SIMPLE JUST BE QUIET AND STAY SEATED.
THAT SOUNDS TOO EASY.
AREN'T YOU GOING TO JUMP UP AND DOWN, OR CHANT OR SOMETHING?
CONCEN-TRATION ...
IS CRUCIAL. OTHER THAN THAT,
HYSTERIA IS UNNEC-ESSARY.

NOW,
LOOK INTO MY EYES.
!?
MAS-TER.
YOUR EYES ARE... REALLY STRANGE.
OH!
YOUR EYES...
THEY'RE LINKED TO THE WORLD OF THE SPIRITS!

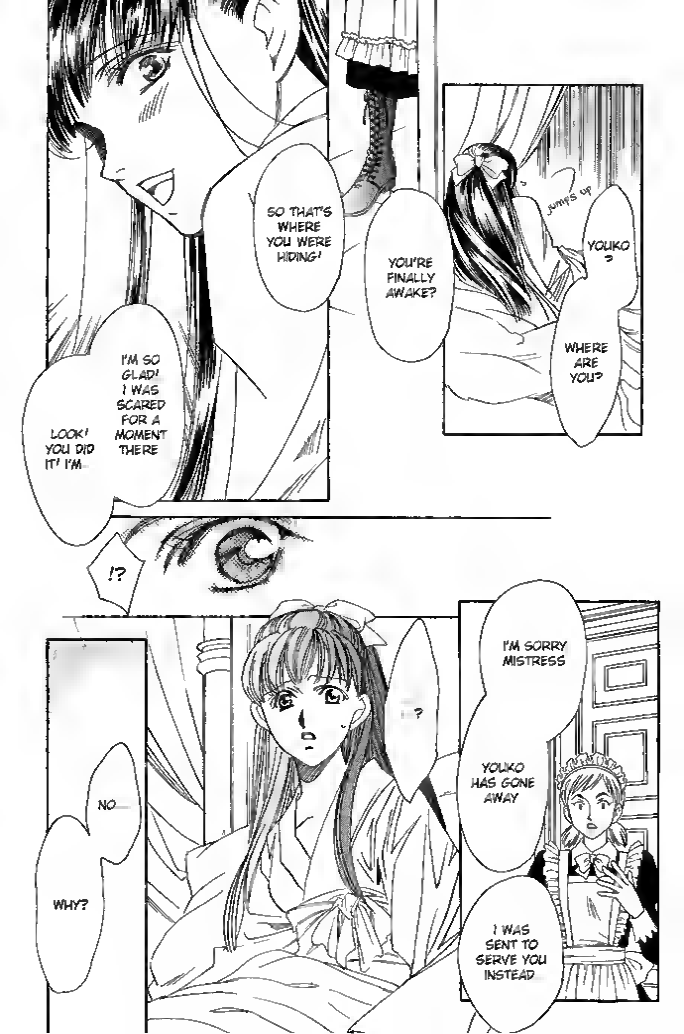
NO MATTER WHAT HAPPENS, DON'T MOVE FROM THAT MAT.
THIS IS
THE MAT IS A FORCEFIELD. IF YOU LEAVE IT, YOU WILL LOSE MY PROTECTION.
A WEAK FOX SPIRIT LIKE YOURSELF WOULD QUICKLY BE TORN APART BY THE RAW SPIRITUAL POWER
AAH!
WHAT'S THAT SOUND?
!?
THUMP...
THUMP...
!?

MIS-
TRESS!
MISTRESS!!
DON'T
COME
ANY
CLOS-
ER—
YOU'LL
BE
TRAPPED
TOO
YOU
KO

AAAH!
NOW THE IVY WANTS YOU INSTEAD.
IT MUST BE AGONY. I WONDER... CAN YOU SURVIVE IT?
OF COURSE...!
SWISH
HA.
INTER-ESTING.

Faint
IF IT WANTS TO TAKE ME
THEN IT CAN GO AHEAD
!
I HAVE LIVED ....
AS A FOX WITCH ....
FOR 800 YEARS!
TO SOME-THING LIKE THIS...
I WILL NOT LOSE!!

A...
AH!
MISTRESS
!
MY BODY FEELS SO LIGHT...
WHEN DID...
MY HOME ...?
THIS IS...


Uh-oh's up
YOUKO ?
WHERE ARE YOU?
YOU'RE FINALLY AWAKE?
SO THAT'S WHERE YOU WERE HIDING!
I'M SO GLAD! I WAS SCARED FOR A MOMENT THERE
LOOK! YOU DID IT! I'M...
!?
I'M SORRY MISTRESS
YOUKO HAS GONE AWAY
I WAS SENT TO SERVE YOU INSTEAD
?
NO...
WHY?

YOU?
WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE, YOUKO?
UM...
AREN'T YOU STAYING WITH YOUR PRECIOUS MISTRESS?
BECAUSE OF CIRCUMSTANCES BEYOND MY CONTROL...
IS IT OKAY IF I STAY HERE FOR A WHILE?
CIRCUMSTANCES? WHAT CIRCUMSTANCES?
THEY WON'T GO AWAY...
NO MATTER WHAT I DO
THERE'S NO WAY I CAN GO BACK UNTIL THEY'RE GONE...
GET LOST
WHY NOT? YOU'RE A FREAK TOO, RIGHT?
BECAUSE YOU'RE A PAIN IN THE NECK! IT'S NOT MY PROBLEM!

PLEASE! IF YOU DON'T HELP ME, I'LL DIE IN A GLITTER!
I CAN'T TURN BACK INTO A FOX ANYMORE!
sniff
sniff
I...
I'm the damn nice
FINE BUT ONLY UNTIL YOUR EARS GO AWAY
WHAT!?
WHY SO SHOCKED?
OH!
I'M JUST SURPRISED THAT YOU'RE ACTUALLY SWAYED BY TEARS!
I TAKE IT BACK! GET OUT!
WOW! NO WAY!
SO YOU'RE ACTUALLY A NICE GUY?
SHUT THE HELL UP!
END

ピチコミックス

大正夢幻奇譚

氷栗優

PICHI COMICS

大正夢幻奇譚

たいしょうむげんきたん

氷栗優

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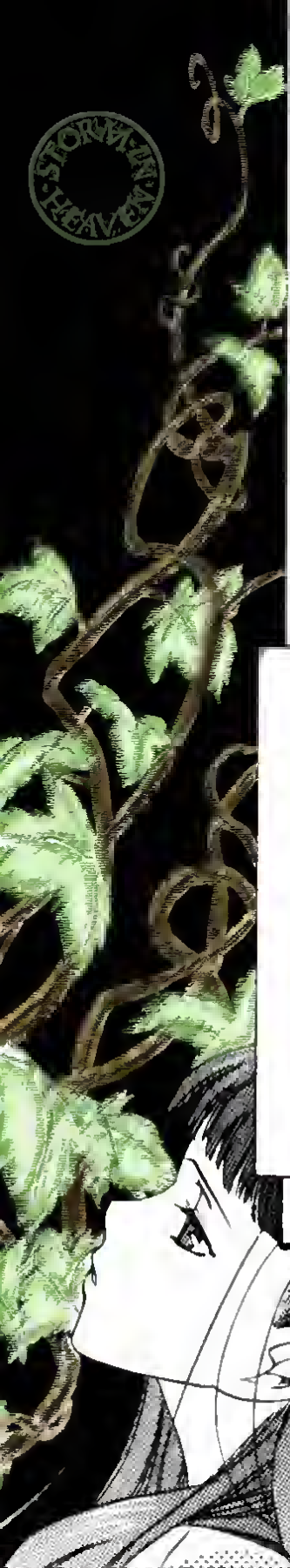
Yu Higuri



TAISHOU MUGEN KITAN - THE DEATH STONE

YOU HIGURI

CHAPTER 02

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TAISHO
DREAM
STORIES
-
THE
DEATH
STONE

SWEEP
SWEEP
AH!
GOOD MORNING!
MASTER HANAWAKA WILL BE ALONG IN JUST A MOMENT, SO PLEASE COME IN
OH... WELL THEN.
WHO ON EARTH IS THAT GIRL?
DID THE HANAWAKA HOUSEHOLD HAVE A SERVANT LIKE THAT BEFORE?
WHISPER
AND SHE'S EVEN WEARING WESTERN CLOTHING!
TURNS
OH, DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME.
I'M ... JUST STAYING FOR A WHILE.

I WAS JUST SWEEPING
DON'T BOTHER, AND DON'T SHOW YOURSELF IN PUBLIC EITHER
slam
AAAH!
MASTER HANAWAKA!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE!?
gr-ab
WA-AH!
STOMP STOMP
TODAY I WILL BE TEACHING YOU THE BASIC STEPS OF THE DANCE
HANAWAKA, THAT GIRL...
POOF
AH!
DRAT
I WAS JUST HELPIN OUT!
OW—!
THAT WAS MEAN!
IN THE PAST, I WAS A 9-TAILED FOX THAT HUMANS WERE TERRIFIED OF
MY NAME IS YOUKO, AND I'M AN 800 YEAR OLD FOX SPIRIT

THIS MAN IS AKIRA HANAWAKA
HE'S THE HEIR TO THE HANAWAKA NOH SCHOOL, WHICH TRACES ITS LINEAGE BACK TO THE MUROMACHI ERA
HIS DANCING IS SO INCREDIBLY BEAUTIFUL IT EVEN CALLS TO THE SPIRITS YET SOMEHOW, I DON'T THINK HE'S A NORMAL HUMAN
BUT A WHILE AGO, I FOUGHT WITH THIS MAN AND LOST ALL MY POWER
DUE TO CERTAIN CIRCUMSTANCES, I ALSO LOST MY ABILITY TO TRANSFORM MY APPEARANCE
FOR THAT REASON, I HAVE HAD TO HIDE FROM MY BELOVED MISTRESS, LEST SHE FINDS OUT WHAT I TRULY AM
BECAUSE I HAVE NOWHERE ELSE TO GO, I'M STAYING WITH THIS MAN FOR THE TIME BEING
APPROXIMATELY 1336-1573 CE

MASTER HANA-WAKA!
IT'S SUSPI-CIOUS, NO MATTER HOW YOU LOOK AT IT!
mutter
mutter
ANYWAY, WHY IS IT THAT A MERE NOH MASTER IS SO ATTUNED TO THE OCCULT POWERS?
AT ANY RATE, I KNOW THAT HE ATTRACTS DEMONS
AS IT IS, I'M GOING INSANE!
PLEASE, PLEASE, GIVE ME SOME WORK TO DO!
I FEEL LIKE I'M JUST A BURDEN WHEN I'M DOING NOTHING
Like cooking or cleaning
THE PROBLEM IS THAT YOU'VE BECOME THE FOCUS OF THE LADIES' GOSSIP. I DON'T KNOW HOW ELSE TO STOP THE RUMOURS THAT I'M KEEPING A MAID AS A LOVER.
IT'S NOT THAT I PERSONALLY CARE ABOUT YOU APPEAR-ING IN PUBLIC

BUT..
IF YOU'RE SO UNCOMFORTABLE ABOUT IT THEN JUST GO HOME!
WHAT IS IT?
An eviction notice?
IT'S A CHARM!
Meow.
SLAP
AAAAHHH!
LOOK
FLAP
WHAT THE HELL...!!
!?
OH.. MY EARS
THAT CHARM WILL ASSIST YOUR SHAPE-SHIFTING POWERS. KEEP IT ON YOU AT ALL TIMES.

Ma Master
GO BACK TO YOUR MISTRESS
DON'T TALK TO ME WITH SUCH A SICKENINGLY SWEET VOICE!
JUST GO ALREADY!
I CAN GO BACK TO MISTRESS SAKUYA!!
AKIRA!
WHERE'S AKIRA!?
LOOK HERE, JUST WAIT A MINUTE
Slam
OVERJOYED
WHAT'S ALL THE COMMOTION ABOUT?
DASH
I'LL GO SEE!

BUT I JUST TOLD TO YOU STAY OUT OF SIGHT
She's already gone
WHAT!? LET ME PASS!
I'VE ALREADY TOLD YOU THAT THE MASTER IS BUSY RIGHT NOW!
WHY ARE YOU CAUSING SUCH A RACKET THIS LATE AT NIGHT?
Do we even have maids?
OH AH.
THIS MAN.
PLEASE GO BACK HOME
YOU CAN'T SEE THE MASTER UNLESS YOU HAVE A PRIOR APPOINTMENT
IS SHE THE ONE THEY'RE TALKING ABOUT...?
I'M NOT SAYING IT'S WRONG, BUT...
OH...?
AND WHO ARE YOU?
I'm not leaving until I do.
I'M HERE TO SEE AKIRA
WHAT ON EARTH IS...?

KA-GURA!?
!?
HEY-
IT'S BEEN A WHILE, HASN'T IT?
BRO-THER.
HUH?
DID HE SAY-, KAGURA?
OH!
THEN HE MUST BE THE HEIR TO THE MITAMA SHRINE
THEY WERE BROUGHT UP LIKE BROTHERS
THIS IS THE FIRST TIME I'VE EVER SEEN HIM.

SO YOU'RE NOW THE HEIR OF THE HANA-WAKA FAMILY?
YOU'VE CERTAINLY GOT IT SWEET
SHINK
!?
THE TRUTH IS THAT THE MASTER WAS ADOPTED BY THE HEAD PRIEST OF THE SHRINE WHEN HE WAS A CHILD
BUT EVEN THOUGH I SAY THAT THEY WERE BROUGHT UP LIKE BROTHERS
HMM
IT'S A PARTICULARLY IMPRESSIVE ACCOMPLISH-MENT FOR AN UNWANTED BRAT FROM NOWHERE
reach
ANGRY
HOW DARE HE!!!
BUT THEN AGAIN, EVEN THOUGH YOU WERE JUST A CHARITY CASE.

YOU ALWAYS DID GET EVERY-THING.
YOU-KO?
GET YOUR HANDS OFF HIM!
WHAT ARE YOU DOING TO MY MAST-ER!?
BURY
AAHHHH!!
WHAT WAS THAT?
WHAT ARE YOU?

MY BODY WON'T STOP SH KING
THIS MAN... HE ISN'T A NORMAL HUMAN
HEH
BRAT
ANY-WAY
sigh
STEP
I'LL WALK YOU TO THE DOOR
I MUST HAVE DRUNK TOO MUCH TONIGHT
I'M GOING HOME
DON'T BOTH-ER
PLUS

HE DIED. WE HAD THE FUNERAL A COUPLE OF DAYS AGO
SO IF YOU WANTED TO ATTEND, IT'S TOO LATE NOW
KAGURA
YOU CAN'T MEAN THAT...?
EVEN THOUGH MY FATHER
PROBABLY WANTED YOU TO BE HIS SUCCESSOR.
I'M GOING TO INHERIT THE POSITION OF HEAD PRIEST AT MITAMA SHRINE
NOT THAT IT MATTERS, RIGHT?
IT'S NOT LIKE YOU WERE HIS REAL SON
MAD AS HELL
DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT.
I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT JERK!
WE'LL HAVE TO FIND A WAY TO EXORCISE HIM, 'COS THAT MAN'S NOT HUMAN!
SEE YOU LATER

WHAT?
ANYWAY, JUST FORGET ABOUT IT AND HURRY ON HOME
IT'S GETTING LATE...
I'M THE ONE...
WHO MADE HIM LIKE THAT.
BUT...
THAT WAS THE FIRST TIME...
YEAH.
I'VE EVER SEEN MY MASTER LOOK SO SAD

I WONDER WHAT MY MISTRESS WILL SAY WHEN I SUDDENLY APPEAR AGAIN?
SKIP
SKIP
SKIP
SSSSSSS
HMM?
OH, THE GIRL FROM BEFORE
HEY!
DASH
I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! WHAT A VULGAR ANIMAL!
WAIT A MINUTE!
I SAID
GRAB
WHA !?
scratch scratch
LET GO! LET GO!
DON'T TOUCH ME WITH YOUR FILTHY HANDS!
KYAA!!

AKI-RA...
WHAT DID HE TELL YOU?
AAH!
NA-DA!
LET ME GO!
HE WAS JUST REALLY SAD, AND HE LOOKED LIKE HE REGRETTED SOMETHING ABOUT YOUR PAST.
!
IS THAT RIGHT?
WELL, HE DAMN WELL SHOULD. AKIRA OWES ME.
HE OWES MORE THAN A LIFETIME OF SUFFER-ING COULD EVER REPAY
HA!
HA HA HA HA HA!
WHAT'S SO FUNNY!?

Leer
THAT YOU HAVE THE SCENT OF AN ANIMAL
YOU KNOW, I'VE BEEN THINKING FOR A WHILE NOW...
!?
WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT...!?
LET ME GO! THAT HURTS!
THIS MAN
I'LL SCRE-AM!
AH!
Flap
DAMN IT! MY CHARM...!
!?

DID AKIRA —
SEND YOU?
AH!
SO THAT'S YOUR TRUE FORM!
HEY, DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE DEATH STONE?
HE'S SO FULL OF HATRED
EVEN IF I TELL HIM HE'S WRONG... I DON'T THINK HE'LL BELIEVE ME.

THE SOULS OF EVIL FOX SPIRITS
I'VE HEARD THAT NAME BEFORE.
THE DEATH STONE?
AH, I REMEMBER NOW. IN ONE OF MY MASTER'S PLAYS
BECOME A STONE WHEN THEY'RE DESTROYED
SOME-THING LIKE THAT HAPPENED
WHAT IS THIS POWER. IT'S PULLING ME TOWARDS IT!
IS HE TRYING TO EXORCISE ME !?
IN THE NAME OF THE SACRED LIGHT WHICH PIERCES THE DARKNESS OF NIGHT. .
BURN THIS CREATURE OF SHADOWS.

BEGONE!
SEER IT WITH THE WRATH OF FIRE. SCOURGE IT OF EVIL.
RETURN IT TO STONE.
ENCASE IT, FOREVER IN A GRANITE SHROUD!
NO! I HAVE TO GO BACK TO MY MISTRESS!
I CAN'T BE TRAPPED HERE!
HELP ME!

I WISH MY LIFE REALLY WAS THAT INTERESTING...
I'LL BET! IT MUST BE GREAT TO HAVE SO MANY WOMEN!
I don't know how he does it.
THE MASTER SURE GETS AROUND! IT MUST BE ONE OF THOSE TRYSTS
THERE'S SOMETHING I HAVE TO ATTEND TO.
MASTER...
WHERE ARE YOU GOING AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT?
THIS...

I SENSED SOME-THING HORRIBLE
AKIRA
KA-GURA!
WHAT... DID YOU DO TO YOUKO?
YOU-KO?
IT'S OVER THERE.
AH, YOU MUST MEAN YOUR FOX DEMON.

SLAP
!!
!
YOU STUPID FOOL!
WHAT THE HELL!?
DON'T UNDER-ESTIMATE YOUKO'S POWER!
SHE RETURNED TO THAT SHAPE BECAUSE THAT'S HER TRUE FORM!

FLASH
!
COULDN'T YOU SEE THAT!?
WHEN FOXES RETURN TO STONE THEIR SPIRIT CAN FEED OFF THE LIFE ENERGY OF OTHER HUMANS AND ANIMALS! THAT'S WHY IT'S CALLED THE DEATH STONE!
THEY KILL ANYTHING THEY TOUCH! YOUKO IS A FOX WITCH STRONG ENOUGH TO MASTER ADVANCED SPIRITUAL POWERS!
SPLASH
STAND BACK, KAGURA!
IT'S DANGER-OUS HERE!

ONCE A FOX SPIRIT TURNS INTO THE DEATH STONE...
THEIR UNLEASHED POWER FLUCTUATES RAPIDLY
DAMN
WOOF
THE SKY IS BLOOD RED!
WHAT'S GOING ON?

KA-GURA!
SPLASH
ALL I NEED TO DO IS DESTROY THE STONE, RIGHT?
THAT'S EASY!
STOP! DON'T GET ANY CLOSER! THERE'S NO WAY YOU CAN DO IT BY YOURSELF!
I DON'T NEED YOUR HELP!
SHUT UP!!
WITHIN ME FLOWS THE BLOOD OF ANCESTORS WHO HAVE DRUNK THE WATERS OF THE RIVER AT THE TAOIST EARTH GATE ITSELF!
I'M NOT GOING TO LISTEN TO THE ADVICE OF A NOTHING FROM NOWHERE!
A FOUNDLING LIKE YOU DOESN'T KNOW ANYTHING EXCEPT HOW TO PRETEND THAT YOU'RE BETTER THAN YOU REALLY ARE!
THIS ROCK ...!
BUBBLE

SPLASH!
KA-GU-RA!
!
A CRUEL BASTARD LIKE YOU HAS NO RIGHT TO LIVE!
DIE!
DIE!
DIE!
CURSE YOU!
KA-GU-RA!
-!!!!!!!!!!

AKI-
RA...
QUICKLY! GRAB THE STONE!
!

I'M FINE!
JUST GRAB THE STONE AND THROW IT AS FAR AWAY AS YOU CAN!
AKIRA!
AAH !!
DAMNIT!!
THIS ALWAYS HAPPENS! HE'S ALWAYS IN FRONT OF ME, BLOCKING MY PATH!
NN-NGH ...!!

AND ALL I CAN EVER DO IS CHASE AFTER HIM FROM BEHIND!
UWAAAAHHH!
*UNTRANSLATABLE CHANT
ON BAZARA*
GIN! HARACHI HATAYASOWAKA.
BOOM

SPLASH
AAAAAAHHH!
AH!
really
COULDN'T YOU HAVE BEEN A BIT NICER TO ME!?
splatter
HEY, I'M THE VICTIM HERE!
LET'S NOT FORGET THE EVIL BASTARD WHO TRAPPED ME LIKE THAT!!
YOU'RE THE ONE WHO WAS TRYING TO KILL US.
THAT STUPID KAGURA JERK SHOULD JUST

SLAM

HE LEFT AGES AGO
HUH? WHERE DID HE GO?
...?

IRRI-TAT-ING FOOL!

DAMN!

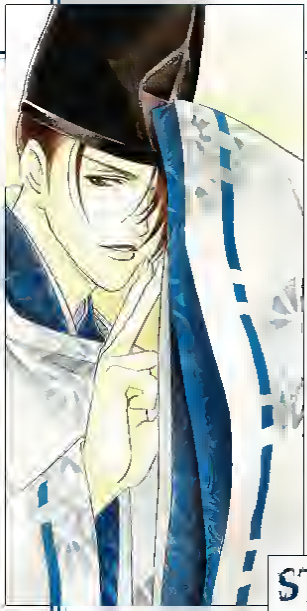
DAMN!
DAMN!!
DAMN!
BUT STILL...
KAGURA DOESN'T YET UNDERSTAND...
HOW POWERFUL HE REALLY IS.
TO TOUCH THE DEATH STONE WITH HIS BARE HANDS AND SURVIVE
THAT'S SOMETHING NOT EVEN I COULD DO
THE POISON FROM THE STONE WOULD HAVE KILLED ANYONE ELSE
Even the crows shied away when they came close
YOU'RE SUCH A BASTARD
YOU TRICKED KAGURA INTO DOING ALL THE REALLY DANGEROUS STUFF DIDN'T YOU?

!
ONLY BECAUSE I KNEW HE'D BE OKAY
ANYWAY, YOUR EARS.
AH!
BUT I LOST THE CHARM,
SO WHY!?
YOU CAN THANK KAGURA FOR THAT TOO
IT'S JUST AN UNCONSCIOUS SIDE EFFECT OF HIS POWER.

HE'S SPENT HIS WHOLE LIFE CHASING AFTER ME...
EVEN THOUGH HE'S SO STRONG HIMSELF.
YOU KNOW WHAT?
THE TWO OF YOU ARE JUST LIKE YIN AND YANG.
IT'S ONLY WHEN YOU'RE TOGETHER THAT YOU BECOME TRULY COMPLETE.
I ENJOYED THE TIME WE SPENT TOGETHER.
WILL YOU SEND MY GREETINGS TO YOUR MISTRESS?
OF COURSE.
BUT IT'S GOING TO BE AWFUL TRYING TO EXPLAIN EVERY-THING.

IF YOU'RE NOT CAREFUL YOU'LL CATCH A COLD TOO, MASTER.
I'LL BE FINE.
UH ...
CAN I JUST ASK ONE MORE QUESTION?
TO BE PERFECTLY HONEST...
I THINK SHE'LL BE MORE SURPRISED BY THE FACT THAT I'M RETURNING HER MAID SOAKING WET.

BECAUSE I'M A GOOD DANCER.
WHY WERE YOU ADOPTED BY THE HANAWAKA FAMILY?



TAISHO MUGEN KITAN

by You Higuri

CHAPTER THREE:

"BELOVED PRINCESS"

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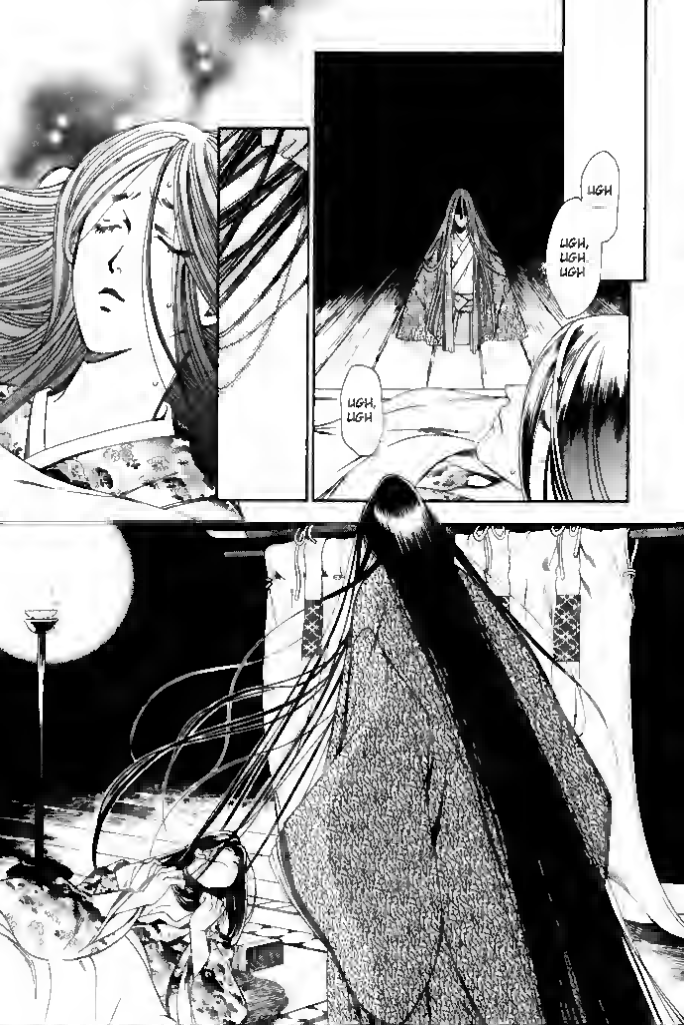
STORM IN HEAVEN

Beloved
Princess

SLIP


UGH
UGH, UGH, UGH
UGH, UGH

SLAP
HATEFUL WOMAN WHO STOLE MY BELOVED
I WANT YOU TO FEEL MY HATRED!
!
WHAT—
WH—
WHAT IS THIS?
FLARE
AH!

WHO THE HELL ?!
STOP RIGHT THERE
ABENO SEIMEI, ONMYOUJI*
*A KIND OF SORCERER/EXORCIST
UGH ...
GYA 4444 !!
HALF WILDERNESS OF SOUND AND HALF THE SOUND OF DOOM EVIL SPIRIT BROWN IS THE COIN OF TREACHERY
SO YOU ARE SEIMEI.
JUST ONE MORE STEP! JUST ONE MORE STEP AND...

AH!
LORD MINBU !!
AHH

M... MONSTER!
TURN
URGH!
AH...
YOU SAW EVERYTHING, DIDN'T YOU!
SUCH BEHAVIOR!
AND TO THINK THAT ONCE WE GOT ALONG SO WELL.
ARE PEOPLE'S HEARTS REALLY SUCH CHANGEABLE, CHEAP THINGS? DID YOU FORGET ME FOR ANOTHER WOMAN?
I WAITED FOR YOU, AND YOU TREAT ME IN THIS WAY!
I HATE YOU.
I HATE YOU!!

MINBU TAIFU...
THAT WOMAN'S CHANGE TO SUCH A MISERABLE CONDITION—
WAS BECAUSE OF YOU YOURSELF...
TERRIBLE... I NEVER REALIZED THAT SHE WAS SUCH A CREATURE
TO THINK THAT AT ONE TIME I EVEN CALLED THAT THING MY WIFE...
IT'S HARD TO BELIEVE IT'S SO LIVELY HERE DURING DAYTIME
IT DOESN'T HELP THAT WHEN NIGHT FALLS, TRAFFIC ALMOST ENTIRELY DISAPPEARS FROM HERE—
THE DAY HAS ALREADY ENDED, HASN'T IT?
LET'S HURRY

KYAAA !!!
HUH?
DRIP
THE AREA AROUND MATSUBARA IS PARTICULARLY BAD
SOMEHOW THAT AREA JUST FEELS WRONG
IT'S A TERRIBLE THING
THAT A HEADLESS CORPSE SHOULD BE FOUND AT MATSUBARA, AND DURING A FEAST OF ALL TIMES.
ADD IN THE FACT THAT WHILE THE COURT LADIES WERE GOING TO FIND SOMEONE, IT SUDDENLY DISAPPEARED. AND IT'S A MYSTERIOUS STORY INDEED.
SINCE THAT DAY NOT A SINGLE PERSON HAS SEEN MINBU TAIFU.
THE CHIEF RUMOR IS THAT MINBU WAS TAKEN FROM THE PALACE BY A DEMON
SINCE THEN, NORIHIRA SHINNOU* AND THE OTHERS ...
HAVE BEEN COWERING IN THEIR ROOMS UNTIL DAWN FOR THE PAST THREE DAYS, PRAYING FOR GRACE
HE'S ALWAYS HAD PROBLEMS DEALING WITH THE SPIRITUAL, HASN'T HE?
*THE FUTURE EMPEROR

IN ORDER TO REASSURE NORIHIRA SHINNOU, THE EMPEROR...
HAS REQUESTED THAT LORD RAIKOU ELIMINATE THE DEMON
NOW THAT YOU MENTION IT, HE TOOK THE HEAD OF THAT DEMON AT MOUNT ODE—
MINAMOTO RAIKOU—?!
PLEASE WAIT
YOU MUST BE THE ONMYOUJI ...
DID YOU HAVE SOME BUSINESS WITH ME?
THAT DEMON HAS BEEN ELUDING ME FOR SOME TIME NOW.
MAY I BE PERMITTED TO LEND YOU MY STRENGTH?
!
DON'T NEED IT.
I'M NOT THE TYPE TO USE PRAYERS AND INCANTATIONS AND SUCH.
AS LONG AS I HAVE MY DEMON SLAYER HERE, I'LL BE FINE.

SO YOU INTEND TO JUST WANDER AROUND AT RANDOM IN SEARCH OF THE DEMON?
I'M JEALOUS OF YOUNG PEOPLE'S STAMINA.
hehe
IF IT WAS ME OF COURSE, I WOULDN'T DO SUCH A WASTEFUL THING
ARE YOU TRYING TO SAY THAT YOU KNOW THE DEMON'S HIDING PLACE?!
Are you that old?
IN ALL THINGS IN NATURE THERE IS A HIDDEN WORLD WHOSE MEANING AND WORKING STATISTICS WERE ONCE UNDERSTOOD.
MY JOB IS TO POINT OUT THE GUIDELINES FOR WHAT CAN HAPPEN IN THE FUTURE IN BOTH PERSONAL AND OTHER MATTERS. AS CONCERNS FORTUNE AND MISFORTUNE
IT USES THE IDEA OF THE SO-CALLED FIVE PATHS OF YIN AND YANG
CONTINUITY, AND SOME INHERITED CRYSTAL TECHNIQUES
DID THE EXPLA-NATION HELP YOU UNDERSTAND A LITTLE?
NOT AT ALL.
I LEFT THE CAPITAL AND CAME TO UJI AS YOU SAID.
DO YOU REALLY THINK THAT THE DEMON IS HERE?

YIN CONTAINS YANG AND YANG CONTAINS YIN
IN THIS WORLD THERE'S DEFINITELY NO SUCH THING AS PERMANENCE
CONCERNING THE WAY OF BEING ABLE TO SEE THAT STATE, EVEN OPPOSITES GO ON TRANSFORMING
LOVE BETWEEN A MAN AND A WOMAN IS ALSO MUCH THE SAME
—AH LOOK YOU CAN SEE IT NOW
IT'S PROBABLY THERE
THE ATMOSPHERE AROUND THIS PLACE IS ENOUGH TO MAKE YOU SHUDDER
IT SEEMS LIKE IT HASN'T BEEN USED FOR QUITE A WHILE
LORD MINBU SAVED A DROWNING WOMAN IN THE UJI RIVER
IT IS SAID THAT HE THEN SPENT A FAIR AMOUNT OF TIME AT THAT WOMAN'S MANSION

RUSTLE
RUSTLE
I THOUGHT THAT EVEN IF WE CAME HERE THERE MIGHT BE SOME KIND OF CLUE,
BUT THIS IS EVEN WORSE THAN I THOUGHT
SO WHAT YOU'RE SAYING IS THAT EVEN THOUGH YOU WERE LOOKING AT THAT BOARD, YOU REALLY INTENDED TO BRING ME HERE ALL ALONG, DIDN'T YOU!
I SAID IT BEFORE DID I NOT? THERE'S NOTHING DEFINITE IN THIS WORLD.
GUESSING BOTH CORRECTLY AND INCORRECTLY ARE BOTH PARTS OF FORTUNE-TELLING
WHAT THE HELL IS THAT SUPPOSED TO MEAN?!
Now, now.
I'M OUT OF HERE!
This guy's just a charlatan
HOW ABOUT TESTING WITH YOUR OWN EYES WHETHER I'M A CHARLATAN OR NOT?
SMILE
FWUSSH
SNAP
POP

I DIDN'T THINK THAT I WAS COMING ALL THE WAY TO FAR-OFF UJI JUST FOR SOME MAGICAL ARSON.
FWUSSH
EMBRACE THE NATURE OF TIME. FOLLOW THIS
ROK-KOU-RI-SHUKU
RIN
BYOUTOU
SWISH
SHA

ZEN
KAICHIN
RETSU
ZAI
AHH!
WH—WHAT? WHAT HAPPENED?!

SWAP
POP
FWUSSH
OH, THE PAIN, THE PAIN!
WHO DARES DISTURB ME?
SHIT!
PLEASE WAIT LORD RAIKOU.
WHY ARE YOU STOPPING ME, SEIMEI?!
ARE YOU THAT DEMON'S COMPANION?!
!

I'M GOING TO TEAR YOU INTO PIECES!
DON'T BE STUPID!
BUT DESPITE YOUR RUDENESS I'LL KINDLY SHOW YOU PART OF MY CRAFT.
NIFF
GYAAAAAAA!
FLAPE

FWUSH
AH! DARLING...!
FWOSSH
EVEN DURING FIRE SEASON, I'VE ESCAPED FROM CONFLAGRATIONS BEFORE
THE DEMON THREW ITSELF INTO THE FIRE?!

SWISH
NOT THERE.
WHERE IS IT?
NOT THERE. HIS HEAD ISN'T THERE...
WHERE IS IT?

REMEMBER YOUR TRUE NAME
!?

AH...
MY NAME...IS HASHIHIME.
THE WOMAN WHO WAITS AT THE EDGE OF THE BRIDGE—
WAS IT JUST DREAMS OR REALITY? I WAITED FOR SUCH A LONG TIME—
I'VE NEARLY COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN.
HIS BODY AND HIS VOW AT THE TIME I THOUGHT THAT WE WOULD BE TOGETHER FOR 8,000 GENERATIONS OF CAMELLIA BUDS. TWO LEAVES SPROUTING FROM THE SAME SEED UNTIL THE VERY END. I THOUGHT THAT THINGS WOULD NEVER CHANGE.
UNTIL THIS BODY DECAYED AND I BECAME A DEMON, I WAITED.
AND DESPITE EVERYTHING I DID IN THE END I WAS THROWN AWAY. NO LONGER NEEDED. THIS DESPAIRING HATRED. THROWN AWAY. THROWN AWAY—
THE ONE WHO GAVE YOU THAT NAME WAS MINBU TAIFU—WAS IT NOT?
—BUT BEFORE HE CAME, YOU WERE HERE— ALL THE WHILE—
WHY WERE YOU AT THE EDGE OF THE BRIDGE? SINCE WHEN—?
LUST HAS DAZZLED YOU UNTIL YOU'VE COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN
YOUR REAL NAME THAT IS

SEIMEI, SHIT! THE FIRE IS...!
MY REAL...
NAME...
MY REAL...
!
I BECAME A DEMON...! AND NOW...
NOW THAT I'VE REMEMBERED WHAT WILL YOU DO TO ME?
I USED THIS BODY TO TEAR OFF HIS HEAD!
EVEN NOW, THAT FEELING OF HATRED REMAINS STRONG INSIDE ME.
BY TORN OFF HEAD, DO YOU MEAN THIS?

OH... OH!
RUSTLE-
END SPELL.
THE THING YOU TORE OFF WAS ONLY A STRAW DOLL'S HEAD
JUST AS LORD MINBU CALLED YOU 'BELOVED PRINCESS'—
YOU HAVE ALWAYS BEEN A KIND-HEARTED WOMAN.

RAIN ?
DRIP

THE FLOW OF TEARS WILL
SOON BECOME A SINGLE RIVER —THEN
THERE WILL SURELY BE...
A GREAT OCEAN CONNECTED TO IT.
TO ATONE FOR HUMAN SIN,
WE SHED OUR TEARS TO THE OCEAN FOR PURIFICATION
THAT'S WHAT YOU ARE, ISN'T IT?

FWUSH
!

MY NAME IS PRINCESS SEORITSU.
I AM THE GODDESS OF WATER WHO PROTECTS THE UJI RIVER
BUT HOW DID YOU KNOW THAT?
EVEN I HAD FORGOTTEN MY TRUE FORM—
IN THE MIDST OF THE DAY'S LIGHT, A CANDLE'S FLAME CAN FLICKER AND BECOME A SHADOW
BUT IN THE DARKNESS, A SINGLE CANDLE CAN BECOME A BRIGHT AND DAZZLING SUN

IN SHORT
PRINCESS SEORITSU
I KNEW THAT WHATEVER YOUR FORM, YOU WERE BEAUTIFUL.
THE ABILITY TO SEE THAT
IS WHAT MAKES AN ONMYOUJI
SWWWSSHH
THANK YOU
SEIMEI
WHOOSH

SO, SEIMEI
WHERE IS THE REAL LORD MINEU?
I NEVER WOULD HAVE THOUGHT SHE WAS A WATER GODDESS
AND WE DIDN'T EVEN NEED YOUR SWORD
FLIP
HE'S LIKELY HIDDEN HIMSELF IN A HOUSE SOMEWHERE
I suppose it is impossible for him to return to society for a while, right?
EVEN WHILE YOU WERE SAYING ADMIRABLE THINGS ABOUT BEING ALLOWED TO HELP
I SEE HOW IT IS YOU INTENDED TO "GET IN MY WAY" FROM THE VERY START, DIDN'T YOU?
YOU NEVER WOULD HAVE GUESSED THAT I USED MAGIC TO MAKE THAT DOLL LOOK LIKE A HUMAN, RIGHT?

IT SEEMS LIKE EVERYTHING WORKED OUT.
HMM...
BUT LIKEWISE, BECAUSE OF THAT, DIDN'T EVERYTHING GO WELL IN THIS CASE?
EVEN THAT IS AN IMPORTANT THING IN THE CYCLE OF THE WORLD'S MOVEMENTS.
THINGS I CAN'T PREDICT
ARE THERE THINGS THAT EVEN ONMYOUJI CAN'T PREDICT?
LOOK THERE
THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS TRULY ARE SPLENDID.
HOW ABOUT SLOWING DOWN A BIT TO WATCH THEM AS WE GO?

NO WAY I DON'T WANT TO WASTE A MINUTE BEFORE RETURNING TO THE CAPITAL
I HAVE TO REPORT THIS INCIDENT TO THE CURRENT EMPEROR
SO IF YOU'RE GOING TO DO IT, YOU'LL HAVE TO DO IT ALONE
THAT'S UNFORTUNATE
THE CHERRY BLOSSOMS WILL CRY IF YOU REMAIN SO FOCUSED, YOU KNOW
SWIRL
OH!

SILENCE
WHERE ARE YOU SEIMEI?
HE—EY!
!
SEIMEI?

ONMY-OUJI HUH?
I JUST DON'T GET THAT GUY
CLOMP
CLOMP
JUST AS I THOUGHT, NOT MY STYLE
[BELOVED PRINCE] END

Extra Page
Onmyouji Illustration Gallery

Extra Page
Onmyouji Illustration Gallery

◆作品解説◆

「大正夢幻奇譚」
陰陽師ものという出版社さんからのご依頼で、描きはじめたシリーズですが、一一陰陽というのは調べれば、調べる程、奥が深く正直苦労しました。陰陽と能楽というのは、歴史的にも深い関わりがあるものでして、猿楽などをやっていた声聞師は平安時代の民間の陰陽師の流れをくむと言われています。その猿楽から能に進化を遂げてゆくわけです。
　題材的にも陰陽に関わりのある物語がけっこうあり、能面の右、左でも陽と陰を表しているそうです。
その切り口で描いたのがこの「大正夢幻奇譚」です。

実はこの物語、また終わっておりません。二巻に続く予定です。
もし続きに興味がおありでしたら次巻もぜひ宜しくお願いいたします！

「愛し狼」
初めて描いた陰陽師モノです。安倍晴明でチャレンジしてみました。
これも能が題材となっております。「大正夢幻奇譚」の前身とも言える作品。

「ＥＶＩＬ－ＯＮＥ」
この作品だけ特殊なので先に作品解説をいれさせていただきました。
かなり昔に描いたボーイズラブ作品です。近未来ＳＦＢＬ。

最後に、この本を出すにあたってたくさんの方々にご協力いただきました。
アシスタントの皆さんいつもありがとう。
担当のＳ崎さま、学研のＳ木さま本当にご迷惑をおかけしてすみませんでした一。
あと、この本を手にとって下さった全ての読者さまに心からの感謝をこめて。

次巻も宜しくお願いします。　　2005 2.氷栗優

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TAISHOU MUGEN KITAN

by You Higuri

CHAPTER FOUR - "EVIL ONE"
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STORM IN HEAVEN

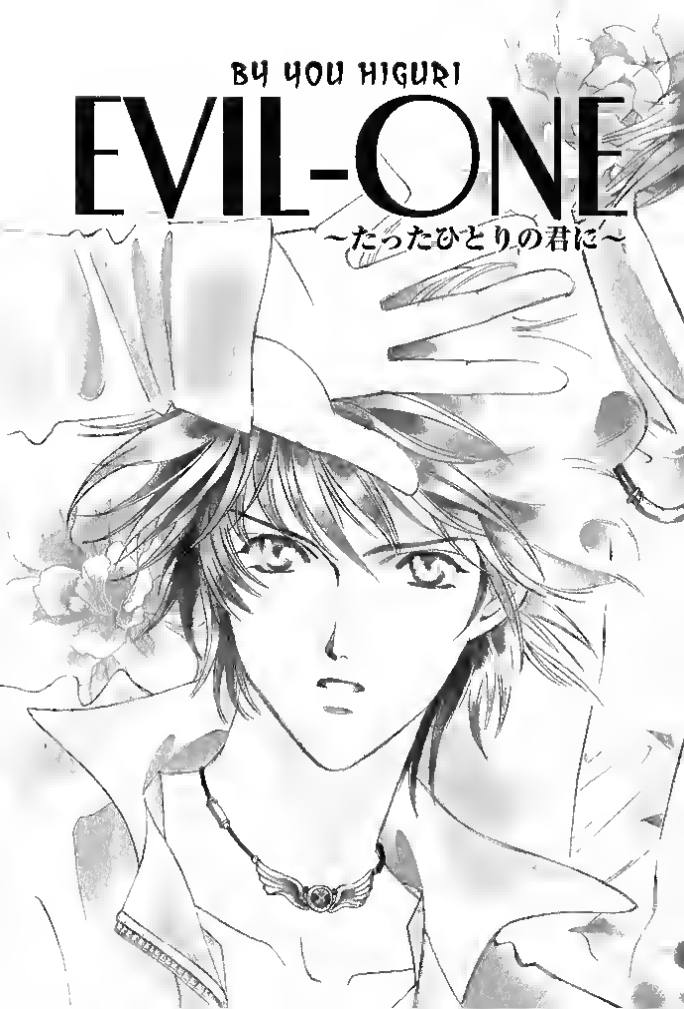
EVIL ONE
wobble
I HATE THE SOUND OF THE RAIN
I GUESS THIS TIME
SGM IS THE PRICE I HAVE TO PAY
SHIT...
THAT SADISTIC BASTARD
I REMEMBER BACK TO BETTER DAYS

20XX
A.D
One third of the population on earth was killed when terrorists unleashed biological weaponry upon humanity
Afterwards that weapon was forever known as—
"Evil One"

BY YOU HIGURI

EVIL-ONE

～たったひとりの君に～



!
RED
RED EYES...

THEY'RE BEAUTI-FUL

WHERE AM I?
DID YOU DO THIS?
BUT I DON'T KNOW YOU...
YOU RE FINALLY AWAKE?
MY NAME IS SUOU. I'M JUST YOUR AVERAGE MEDDLER
DON'T BE SO AFRAID
smile

AGATA!
YOU HAVE A CUSTOMER!
SUOL!
WHISPER
OF COURSE I PROMISED I WOULD
YOU CAME!
WOW!
WHITE HAIR IS HE = FOR EIGHER?
AGATA SURE KNOWS PEOPLE
CHINK

IT'S MY TREAT. YOU KNOW, TO THANK YOU FOR SAVING ME
AND, ALSO...
CAN I DO THIS?
SURE
smile

hiss
WH-
WHY DID YOU PICK ME UP?
HAVING ONE PET OR TWO IS ALL THE SAME, REALLY
PET?
BLACK CATS
hiss

OHH, THAT'S WHY
AAH, IT'S BECAUSE I'M AN ALBINO
THEY'RE CREEPY AND EVIL, AREN'T THEY? RED EYES
YOUR EYES...
NO.
I THINK THEY'RE BEAUTIFUL...
MM.
YOU'RE STILL COVERED IN SCARS
IT'S FINE IT'S NOT LIKE I'M A GIRL

NO MATTER WHAT THEY DO TO ME
I'LL SURVIVE SO I DON'T REALLY CARE
AGATA RIN
YOU'RE THE ONLY SON OF THE BRILLIANT SCIENTIST, DR RIN
WH-?
!
WHY DO YOU KNOW?
IT'S NOT LIKE IT'S A SECRET, BUT...
DR. RIN
IT'S HIM!
HE'S THE MAD SCIENTIST WHO CREATED THE EVIL ONE!
HE'S THE DEATH GOD WHO DESTROYED HUMANITY!!
THAT'S A LIE!
HOMICIDAL MANIAC!
IT WASN'T ME! THEY STOLE THE RESEARCH FROM MY LABORATORY!!

NO!!
NO!!
WHAT ARE YOU SAYING? YOU MURDERED EVERYONE!
PLEASE, GIVE MY WIFE THE VACCINE SHE'S ALREADY SICK.
IF YOU GIVE HER THE VACCINE
IT'S YOUR FAULT! YOURS!
I'M INNOCENT!
IT WASN'T ME!
DAD ...!

BANG
NO ONE BELIEVED HIM, BUT THE TRUTH IS THAT THERE WAS NO PROOF!
IT WAS CRUEL! IT WAS DIS-GUST-ING!
MY FATHER WOULD NEVER HAVE CREATED THAT DISEASE
IT WAS A LIE!
SO I'M GOING TO SURVIVE AND CLEAR THE DISHONOR ON MY FATHER'S NAME!
I WILL ...

DR RIN WAS INNOCENT
NO MATTER WHAT ANYONE SAYS I'LL ALWAYS BELIEVE THAT
!
I KNOW
SHOU

I BELONG TO A TOP SECRET DEPARTMENT OF THE FBI CODE-NAMED "GHOST"
IT'S STRANGE FOR YOU TO ASK ME FOR IT, AGATA
THE ONES WHO CREATED THE EVIL ONE AND DID THIS TO THE WORLD WERE A SECRET SOCIETY CALLED THE SEVEN HORNS. IT'S OUR JOB TO HUNT DOWN THE SCATTERED REMNANTS OF THE GROUP.
I THINK YOU KNOW THIS MAN.
DO YOU REALLY WANT TO CLEAR YOUR FATHER'S NAME, AGATA?
HE'S ONE OF YOUR CUSTOMERS.
HE'S ALSO A MEMBER OF THE SEVEN HORNS.
!
YOU-RI...

WHAT THE HELL WAS ALL THAT CRAP ABOUT RESCUING A PET? HE WAS JUST MANIPULATING ME!
LAST TIME WAS FANTASTIC! I STILL REMEMBER THE WAY YOU SCREAMED WHEN I WHIPPED YOU
WHENEVER I REMEMBER IT I WANT YOU EVEN MORE
FIND OUT HIS ACTIVITIES IT SHOULDN'T BE TOO DIFFICULT FOR YOU
THAT'S THE ONLY REASON WHY HE STAYED WITH ME!

IT'S JUST LIKE YOU SAID
THEY'RE SLIPPING IN AND OUT OF THE COUNTRY ILLEGALLY
IT WAS JUST SO I'D SPY ON THIS GUY
HEY.
I WANNA GO TO YOUR HOUSE TOUR!!
I THOUGHT WE COULD HAVE SOME FUN THERE
I THINK THAT GUY'S THEIR CONTACT
Here!
THE IMPORTANT STUFF IS PASSWORD PROTECTED, SO I COULDN'T READ IT.
BUT I DOWNLOADED EVERYTHING FROM THAT GUY'S COMPUTER ONTO THIS DISK.
FOR DETAILED THINGS LIKE THE PLACES INVOLVED,
I'LL NEED A LITTLE MORE TIME.
HEY

GRAB
!
IF WE DON'T DISINFECT THIS YOU'LL GET TETANUS.
HE WAS EVEN WORSE THAN LAST TIME.
PARTICULARLY WHEN HE WAS WHIPPING ME.
OWW
OW!
hush

I SEE HE WAS THOROUGH
BLUSH
HEY! WHAT THE...!
O ONCE
ONCE YOU'VE ARRESTED THEM ALL PROMISE ME YOU'LL CLEAR MY FATHER'S NAME
IF YOU'LL DO THAT I DON'T MIND WHAT HAPPENS TO ME

I WAS REALLY HAPPY WHEN YOU SAID YOU BELIEVED ME
IN MY WHOLE LIFE, NO ONE ELSE HAS EVER SAID THAT
YOU HAVE TO PAY MORE ATTENTION TO PROTECTING YOURSELF
WHY DON'T YOU CARE?
THIS KINDNESS
IT'S ALSO FAKE, RIGHT?
BUT IT WAS JUST A MANIPULATIVE LIE

SAY IT!
SAY IT, SUOU!
IF YOU REALLY CARE ABOUT ME, THEN STOP TREATING ME LIKE A TOY!
AND THEN WHAT?
WH-
SHOVE
CRASH
HSSS!

M
NH...
MN-
MM
WHAM
MM-
ST... STOP ...
AH!
MN...

BAS-
TARD!
DON'T YOU KNOW THAT I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU? AND YOU STILL...
Damn!
YOU'RE STILL...
JUST USING ME...

AGATA

YOU SHOULD GO HOME AS SOON AS YOU CAN MANAGE IT.
DON'T SLACK OFF ON TOURU'S SURVEILLANCE.
clench
!

THUD
CRASH
BANG
YOU JERK!
miaaauu...

I'M...
LOSING MY MIND...!
WHY AM I...?
FINE!
I'LL GO RIGHT NOW!
IF I FIND OUT SOMETHING CRUCIAL FROM TOURU
THEN HE'LL JUST HAVE TO FALL IN LOVE WITH ME!
SUOU... YOU JERK!

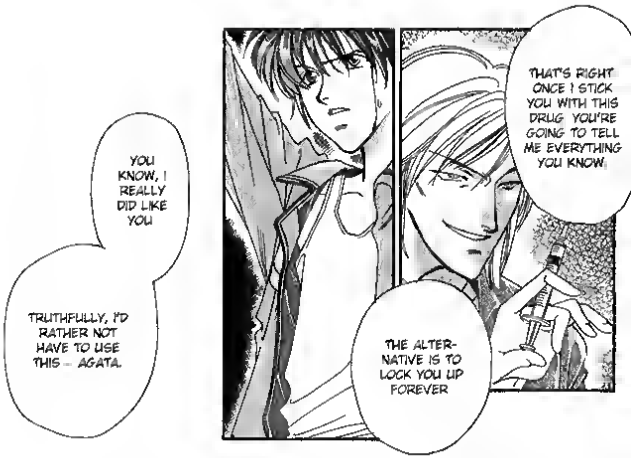
WHY WON'T YOU LOOK AT ME?
I WANT TO SEE MY FACE IN YOUR CRIMSON EYES
IT'S USELESS!
CLICK
THEN
HM... MAYBE THIS...
HELLO, AGATA
WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR IN HERE?
TOURU...

DAMN...!
I ALWAYS THOUGHT YOU WERE A BIT SUSPICIOUS
YOU WERE SENT HERE TO SPY ON ME, WEREN'T YOU?
AGATA WAS CAUGHT!?

HOW !?
I JUST HEARD FROM HEAD-QUARTERS
IT SEEMS THAT TOURU WAS SUSPICIOUS SO NOW THEY'VE CHANGED THEIR PLANS
YOUR NEW ORDERS ARE TO CAPTURE TOURU WHILE HE S STILL ALIVE
WHATEVER HAPPENS DON'T LET THEM FIND OUT WHAT YOU'RE DOING
BUT AGATA ...
WHAT ABOUT AGATA?
I FEEL SORRY FOR THE KID. BUT HE KNOWS TOO MUCH
KILL HIM BEFORE HE TALKS
DO IT PERSON-ALLY

IT'S NOT LIKE YOU TO LET YOURSELF BE SWAYED BY FEELINGS.
WA...WAIT A MINUTE! YOU'RE BEING TOO HASTY ABOUT THIS.
THE SEVEN HORNS HAVE POWERFUL ALLIES
WE CAN STILL USE HIM...
DO YOU WANT TO WASTE [illegible] WE'VE DONE TO GET THIS FAR?
YOUR ORDERS ARE ABSOLUTE.
HAVE YOU FORGOTTEN THAT, SUOU?

KICK
BAH!
I TREATED YOU WELL AND THIS IS HOW YOU REPAY ME? BY SELLING ME OUT TO MY ENEMIES?
YOU BRAT!
SFX WHAM
DO YOU KNOW WHAT THIS IS?


THAT'S RIGHT ONCE I STICK YOU WITH THIS DRUG YOU'RE GOING TO TELL ME EVERYTHING YOU KNOW.
THE ALTER-NATIVE IS TO LOCK YOU UP FOREVER
YOU KNOW, I REALLY DID LIKE YOU
TRUTHFULLY, I'D RATHER NOT HAVE TO USE THIS – AGATA.

SO BEFORE WE START, I'LL GIVE YOU A CHANCE TO TALK.
ARE YOU GOING TO TELL ME WHO SENT YOU?

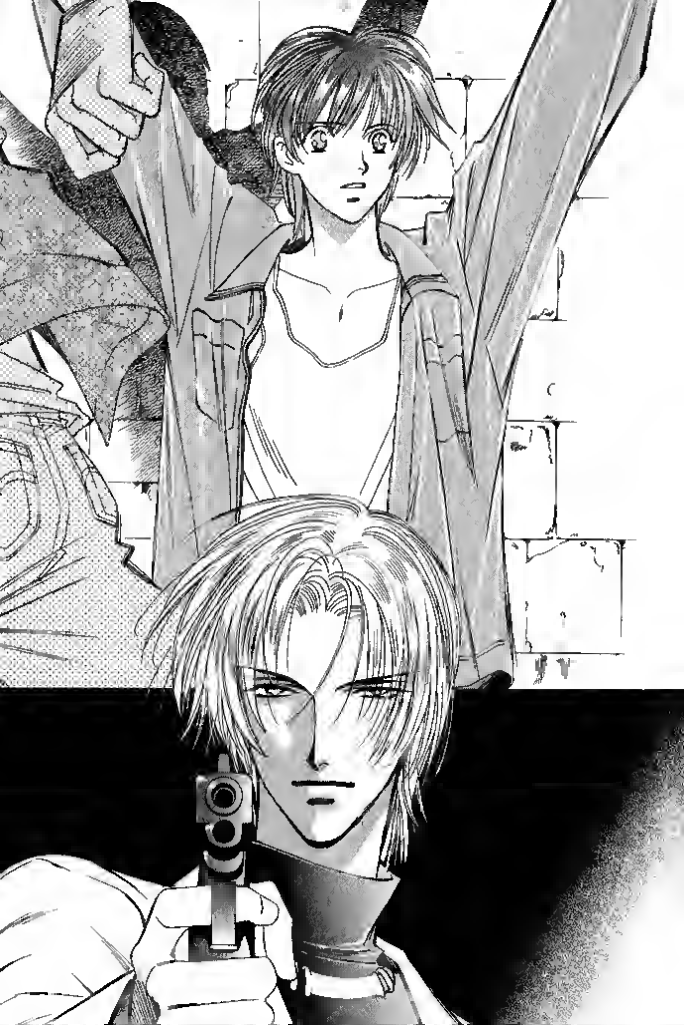
!
ALL RIGHT THEN
HM
YOU MUST REALLY LIKE HIM IF YOU'RE KEEPING QUIET
ST
STOP IT!
HEY
YOU'LL JUST MAKE IT HARDER FOR ME IF YOU STRUGGLE
!?

WH... WHAT ARE YOU DOING?
I JUST HAD A GREAT IDEA
I'LL STICK IT DOWN THERE
IT'LL BE ONE HELL OF AN APHRODI-SIAC

THIS'LL BE THE HEIGHT OF ECSTACY!

SOME-
BODY
...!
chink
ST...
STOP
IT!
DON'T!
BANG
ARGH
!
WHO
IS
IT!?

SUOU!
GHOST!?
FBI .. SECRET DEPARTMENT "GHOST".
SU
!



SO THAT'S HOW IT IS
clench
THIS IS HOW YOU WORK!
!
...OH. I SEE...
ME
Shit
JUST KILL ME AL-READY!

BANG

SU...
OH
BUT WON'T YOU GET IN TROUBLE IF HE DIES?
!?
I'M. ALIVE. !?
MN

I...
I DON'T KNOW WHAT I'M DOING ANYMORE.
I JUST DISOBEYED A DIRECT ORDER...
THAT'S NOT LIKE YOU, SHOU.

?
WHEN YOU DO IT, I'LL SHOW YOU SOMETHING GREAT
HEY
SO IT'S MY FAULT?
THAT'S HORRIBLE!
WHENEVER YOU'RE AROUND, I START ACTING STRANGE
I STOLE THEM FROM HIS ROOM AND HID THEM EARLIER.
FAKE PASS-PORTS?
WHAT IS THIS?
NO WAY
WHEN YOU SAY YOU LOVE ME, OF COURSE!
PIG-HEAD!
OKAY, FINE. LOOK CARE-FULLY AT THE WALL OPPO-SITE US

APPARENTLY HE WAS KEEPING SPARE COPIES FOR ALL HIS ALLIES OVERSEAS IN CASE THEY NEEDED TO FLEE THE COUNTRY
YOU SHOULD BE ABLE TO MATCH THEIR IDENTITIES WITH THE PHOTOS, RIGHT?
IT'LL MAKE YOUR INVESTIGATIONS A LOT EASIER
AGATA...
YOU...
IT WOULD HAVE BEEN SMOOTHER IF YOU HADN'T SCREWED UP SO BADLY!
IDIOT!
YOU'RE SO MEAN!
I'M AMAZING, RIGHT? I BET YOU'RE GLAD YOU DIDN'T KILL ME NOW!
SO AREN'T YOU GONNA THANK ME?

COME ON, LET'S GO
drop
AAH STILL RAIN-ING
IT'S JUST SPRIN-KLING
TOGETHER, THE SOUND OF THE RAIN CALMED THE PAINFUL BUT BELOVED MEMO-RIES INSIDE MY HEART MELTING INTO A GENTLE SYMPHONY
You're so sweet, Suou!
Don't hold back! I'm trying to run.
〔EVIL・ONE～たったひとりの君にさ・・・END〕